

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 12728 171853Z

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ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 SS-20 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PA-04 PRS-01 USIE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00

DRC-01 SCEM-02 NSC-10 NSCE-00 AF-10 EA-11 SCI-06 EB-11

COME-00 /130 W

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O 171800Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1892

INFO CINCEUR IMMEDIATE

SECDEF IMMEDIATE

CINCUSNAVEUR IMMEDIATE

CNO IMMEDIATE

COMSIXFLT IMMEDIATE

CHJUSMAAG ATHENS IMMEDIATE

USN FSO ATHENS IMMEDIATE

COMFAIRMED NAPLES IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MILI, IT NPOS

SUBJECT: GOI PRESS STATEMENT RE SIXTH FLEET FUEL RESOURCES

REF: ROME 12723

1. REFTEL CONCURRED IN PROPOSED RESPONSE (STATE 227546) TO ABC-TV QUERY RE SIXTH FLEET FUEL RESOURCES, AND REPORTED ITALIANS MIGHT TAKE SIMILAR LINE WITH PRESS. ACTUAL ITALIAN RELEASE OF 1524 LOCAL TIME NOVEMBER 17 WAS APPARENTLY TAILORED TO RESPOND ALSO TO RECENT PRESS STORIES (E.G., IN MESSAGGERO AND LONDON FINANCIAL TIMES) WHICH LINKED ALLEGED ITALIAN BUNKERING OF SIXTH FLEET TO POSSIBLE ARAB PETROLEUM BOYCOTT OF ITALY. ITALIAN RELEASE AT THIS TIME WAS ALSO STIMULATED NO DOUBT BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 ROME 12728 171853Z

LUCIO MANISCO ARTICLE IN NOVEMBER 17 ISSUE OF MESSAGGERO.

2. INFORMAL TRANSLATION OF ITALIAN RELEASE FOLLOWS: QUOTE. FOREIGN MINISTRY CIRCLES MAKE KNOWN THAT US SIXTH FLEET STATIONED IN MEDITERRANEAN DOES NOT RESUPPLY ITSELF WITH ITALIAN FUEL, BUT INSTEAD USES ITS OWN SUPPLIES. THEREFORE, THERE IS NO FOUNDATION WHATSOEVER FOR THE IRRESPONSIBLE RUMORS REPORTED IN SOME ELEMENTS OF THE PRESS THAT LINK SUCH NON-EXISTENT (ITALIAN) SUPPLY OPERATIONS WITH A POSSIBLE PETROLEUM BOYCOTT (OF ITALY) BY SOME ARAB COUNTRIES. MOREOVER, THESE RUMORS HAVE BEEN CONTRADICTED BY REITERATED ASSURANCES GIVEN TO US OFFICIALLY BY THE GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED. END QUOTE.

3. THE DEPARTMENT WILL BE INTERESTED ALSO IN THE FOLLOWING SUMMARY TRANSLATION OF EXCERPTS FROM THE MANISCO ARTICLE MENTIONED ABOVE. BEGIN SUMMARY: MANISCO ARTICLE COVERED SECRETARY'S RETURN TO WASHINGTON AND REPORTED DECISION TO REFUEL SEVENTH FLEET FROM US INSTEAD OF JAPAN. MANISCO SAID THIS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST FOR ITALY WHICH FINDS ITSELF IN POSITION ANALAGOUS TO THAT OF JAPAN. ARTICLE STATES SIXTH FLEET USES ITALIAN GASOLINE AND DIESEL FUELS EXCLUSIVELY, TOTALING 1.5 MILLION LITERS MONTHLY. THESE COMMERCIAL AGREEMENTS, SAYS MANISCO ARE NOT PART OF ITALY'S NATO OBLIGATIONS. ARTICLE STATES TELEPHONE CALLS TO PENTAGON REVEALED THAT ROME HAS MADE NO REQUEST ANALAGOUS TO THAT OF JAPANESE (I.E., THAT THE US REFUEL THE SIXTH FLEET DIRECTLY FROM THE US). MANISCO SAYS ONE PENTAGON OFFICIAL NOTED ITALY IN UNUSUAL POSITION, IN THAT ITALIANS FOR THREE WEEKS HAVE FACED GRAVE FUEL CRISIS, BUT HAVE CONTINUED TO EXPORT GASOLINE AND OTHER REFINED PRODUCTS TO VARIOUS COUNTRIES OUTSIDE EC. SAME OFFICIAL EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS WITH REGARD TO DECREE ISSUED DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY BY ITALIAN GOVERNMENT PROHIBITING EXPORT OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS. ARTICLE CONTINUES THAT OFFICIAL SAID ITALIAN FIRMS DO NOT LACK RESOURCES AND IDEAS TO EVADE EITHER NATIONAL OR FOREIGN RESTRICTIONS. MANISCO SAYS "THAT IS, PENTAGON OFFICIAL GAVE US TO UNDERSTAND THAT AS THINGS ARE, THE GOI IS NOT IN THE BEST POSITION TO ASK THE US TO OBTAIN ITS SUPPLIES ELSEWHERE FOR SIXTH FLEET NEEDS". VOLPE

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